

British Parachute Association

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Safety & Training Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Thursday 29 September 2011 at 1900

at the BPA Office, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester LE2 9TF

Present:

John Hitchen	-	Chairman STC
Kieran Brady	-	Skydive Strathallan
Stuart Meacock	-	Hinton Skydiving
Mark Tether	-	JSPC (N)/APA
Alex Busby	-	Tilstock
Noel Purcell	-	Target Skysports
Brucie Johnson	-	Skydive London
Carl Williams	-	Skydive Swansea
Phil Cavanagh	-	BKPC
Nigel Allen	-	SSC
Ian Rosenvinge	-	Peterlee
Matty Holford	-	Silver Stars
Richard Wheatley	-	BPS, Langar
Dennis Buchanan	-	NWPC
Chris McCann	-	UK Para (Sibson)
Martin White	-	22 Training Group RAF
Pete Sizer	-	Headcorn
Gary Stevens	-	Skydive UK Ltd
Paul Applegate	-	Chairman Riggers Committee

Apologies: Mike Bolton, Maggie Penny, George McGuinness, Andy Clark, Dave Wood, Mike Rust, Jim White, Dane Kenny.

In Attendance:

Tony Butler	-	BPA Technical Officer
John Page	-	Vice-Chair STC/Council
Paul Moore	-	Council
Trudy Kemp	-	Assistant to NCSO/TO

Observers: Simon Larcombe, Paul Stockwell, Rebecca Bull, Justin Everitt, Hans Donner, Richard Green, Dave Jelly, Chas McNeil.

ITEM MINUTE

1. MINUTES OF THE STC MEETING OF THE 4 AUGUST 2011

It was proposed by Stuart Meacock and seconded by Matty Holford that the Minutes of the STC Meeting of the 4 August 2011 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 4 AUGUST 2011

Page 6, Item 8 – AOB(ii). The Chairman reported that the Tandem Working Group had now been formed and would be chaired by John Page. The other members would be: Carl Williams, Gary Small, Paul Floyd, Chris McCann and John Carter. The Working Group would be taking input at the DZ Operators' meeting in November and would report back to STC in due course.

Page 6, Item 8 – AOB (iii). The Chairman reported that he had visited the proposed PLA/DZ at RAF Leeming for the Pilgrims and stated that in his opinion it was suitable for parachuting.

The Chairman reported that there was no Riggers Committee meeting on the day of the last STC meeting. Therefore there were no minutes to consider.

Riggers' Meeting

Paul Applegate reported on the Riggers meeting held that afternoon and stated that the Committee had discussed an issue concerning who was qualified to sign up Advanced Packer (AP) and other ratings at membership renewal time.

Pete Sizer reported that currently, AP ratings can be signed up by an Advanced Rigger (AR) or Advanced Instructor (AI) who must be satisfied that the holder is current and up to date with the latest packing related developments and techniques. However, there was a strong feeling amongst the Riggers Committee that AIs should not be signing up APs at rating renewal time, particularly if they do not hold an AP rating themselves.

Pete Sizer stated that the Committee were looking at ways of addressing this issue and that some Riggers had felt that in their opinion it should only be ARs and CCIs signing up these particular ratings, but the main aim was that ratings are only signed up by those who held that particular rating themselves.

Pete Sizer asked that if anyone who had any strong feelings or ideas on this matter to contact him direct and he would collate the information for the next meeting.

3. INCIDENT REPORTS – RESUME

- i) There had been 14 Student Injury Reports received since the last STC meeting. 10 male and 4 female. One Student dislocated his shoulder whilst attempting a dummy pull. The other injuries were on landing.
- ii) Since the last meeting there had been 12 Injury Reports received for FAI 'A' Certificate parachutists or above, 9 male and 3 female.
- iii) There had been 10 Student Malfunction/Deployment Problem Reports received since the last meeting. 8 male and 2 female.
- iv) There had also been 34 Malfunction/Deployment Problem Reports received for FAI 'A' Certificate parachutists or above. 25 male and 9 female.
- v) Since the last meeting there had been 15 Tandem Injury Reports received, including one to an instructor. (12 male and 3 female). Most of the injuries were minor.
- vi) Since the last STC there had been 15 Tandem Malfunction/Deployment Problem reports received, including one where the connector links on the main were not fully tightened after it came back from a reserve re-pack and inspection. The Tandem instructor made 11 jumps with them like that. On the 11th jump a link came apart. The instructor landed it safely.

The Chairman reported that the Riggers Committee had considered this incident at some length that afternoon. He stated that the exact cause of the problem could not be determined at this time, although a number of possibilities had been explored. The Chairman stated that he was hoping to inspect the connector link concerned.

- vii) One report had been received of an AAD firing. A Student jumper with 28 jumps deployed at 2,000ft and his FXC fired.
- viii) There had been 10 reports received of 'off landings' at clubs.
- ix) Three reports had been received of display misfires. 2 'off landings' and a CF canopy entanglement.
- x) There had been 3 reports of parachutists losing equipment in freefall. Two helmets and an altimeter.
- xi) A report had been received of a Tandem Student taking a small camera up with him taped to his wrist even though the Instructor had told him previously that he could not!
- xii) Four reports had been received involving aircraft. One report concerned a wing-suit jumper who went over the tail of an aircraft (Cessna Caravan). He did not wait until he fell away from the aircraft before inflating his wings. He sustained bruising and there was some damage to the tail of the aircraft. The second involved a Turbine Islander that encountered icing whilst flying in cloud and both engines stopped. The engines were restarted and the aircraft landed with all on board. This happened at the end of July and the CCI has not permitted the pilot to fly since. The CCI has decided that before the pilot flies again he should be re-educated including the basic aspects of flying for parachuting, the ANO/CAP 660 and the BPA Ops Manual. The pilot has been flying for parachuting for 22 years amassing approximately 3000hrs on various aircraft. The CCI believes his flying abilities are not in question, especially as in his view he did a good job of dealing with the situation, but perhaps his basic knowledge for para-drop flying was lacking. This incident was reported to the CAA. The third was a report of an aircraft infringement on a DZ/PLA. The fourth report was not a parachuting sortie problem, but involved a parachuting aircraft being flown to a Club. The aircraft, a Cessna Caravan landed at a Club with only the pilot on board, it overshot the grass runway and ended up in a field. The pilot was shaken and the aircraft was damaged. The Chairman stated that this was for information only.

Kieran Brady reported that it had come to his attention on recent BPA Club inspection/audits that Pilots/Clubs had not been using the Deferred Defect Records Sheet for the recording of aircraft defects, which the BPA had requested that they use. A sample of this document had been circulated to CCPs (via CCIs) and DZ Operators in January 2011, together with a CAA Airworthiness Communication explaining the system.

Kieran wished to emphasise that the use of this Deferred Defect Sheet or of one similar containing the same information was a legal requirement.

A copy of the original document containing the sample Deferred Defect Records Sheet would be circulated again with the STC Minutes.

4. INSTRUCTOR COURSE 03/2011

The BPA wished to thank British Parachute Schools, Langar, for hosting the Instructor course, from the 15 – 24 August 2011. A copy of the report had been circulated with the agenda.

The Chairman reported that the report was for information only, as there were no recommendations to vote on.

However, circulated to those present was a letter from David Hickling, who examined on the course, with his comments, which was considered by those present.

5. PERMISSIONS

- i) A letter from Jason Thompson had been circulated with the agenda requesting that Gavin Rixon be given an extension to his AFFBI rating until May 2012, as he had

been unable to attend an AFF Instructor Course due to personal and family commitments.

It was proposed by Jason Thompson (proxy) and seconded by Mark Tether that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- ii) A letter from Mike Rust had been circulated with the agenda requesting an exemption from the jump number requirement for renewing the CSI rating for Val Slattery, who was short of the numbers. Mike's letter had given full details of the request. A letter of support had also been received from Mike Bolton, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

It was proposed by Mike Rust and seconded by Mike Bolton (proxy) that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- iii) An e-mail from Maggie Penny had been circulated with the agenda stating that Rod McCrory, one of her Tandem Instructors failed to complete 20 Tandem descents in the previous 12 months, as a result of injury. As per the Operations Manual requirements he was required to present himself to an IE for refresher training. However they do not have an independent IE in Northern Ireland.

Maggie had requested permission for Rod McCrory to carry out; his suspended harness drills, descent with container and descent with 'C' Certificate parachutist at Wild Geese and a video of such to be forwarded to the BPA office.

A number of questions arose relating to Rod McCrory's present state of health and with regard to the number of Tandem jumps he had completed to date.

Kieran was able to provide some information and stated that Rod's injuries were not related to parachuting and to the best of his knowledge he was now fully recovered.

It was felt by CCIs present, that when dealing with future requests such as this, they would like to see more detailed information contained within the actual request.

Following further consideration, it was proposed by Maggie Penny (proxy) and seconded by Kieran Brady that the above request be accepted.

For: 12

Against: 1

Abstentions: 4

Carried

- iv) An e-mail had been received from Ian Rosenvinge, a copy of which had been circulated to those present requesting an extension to the CSBI rating of Oli Clark whose rating expires at the end of November. Ian had provided full details of this request.

It was proposed by Ian Rosenvinge and seconded by Carl Williams that Oli Clark be given a six month extension to his CSBI rating.

Carried Unanimously

- v) An e-mail had been circulated from Jim White requesting an extension to Mark McConnell's TBI rating.

It was proposed by Jim White (proxy) and seconded by Brucie Johnson that Mark McConnell be given a six month extension to his TBI rating.

Carried Unanimously

6. **A.O.B**

- i) Circulated to those present were maps of an addition to the PLA at Skydive UK, Dunkeswell. The Chairman reported that Skydive UK is to build a 'swoop pond'. The extra procedures in place whilst the pond is in use and students are in the air include Rescue Aids alongside the Pond and in the vehicle, and DZ Control is to ensure that there is a person capable of retrieving a person from alongside the swoop pond when it is in use. This person must be in communication with DZ control or manifest.

The Chairman reported that this was for information only, unless anyone objected. There were no objections raised by those present.

- ii) The Chairman reported that during this year the CAA had received a number of allegations that parachutists have been jumping through cloud. He stated that because of the high numbers of reports, it was the CAA's intention to carry out unannounced visits to Clubs. It was also the belief of himself and the TO that the CAA would expect the BPA to do the same.

- iii) Circulated to those present was an e-mail from Pete Sizer requesting a change to a restriction imposed at Headcorn in 1989 where there is a requirement, which states: *"The conflict watch element of DZ Control (Operations Manual, Section 1, Paragraph 3.3i) will be done by at least an approved Instructor equipped with a transceiver on the airfield frequency. When parachutists with less than 50 jumps and under category 8 are descending the instructor on conflict watch will be suitably positioned adjacent to the runway".*

Pete Sizer stated that due to changes in the nature of the operation over the last 14 years (not least of which is the abolition of round parachutes) and some physical changes to the facilities he would like the last 4 words removed, as they have increased visibility from the telemeters which are now positioned on top of the manifest building, and they rarely have multiple passes of static line students. He stated that on the rare occasion when they do have seven students in the air he would position an extra instructor close to the runway. In addition, the Ops manual reference (above) should be corrected to read; Section 1, Paragraph 4.3.3i.

It was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Martin White that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- iv) Circulated to those present was a paper by Georgie Roles that Stuart Meacock had asked to be distributed. The paper was titled 'Formation Skydiving Initial Coaching and FS1 Qualification Skydive Review 2011'.

Stuart provided details of the reasons behind this paper and stated it was to review or update the process of the new skydiver from post AFF/CS A-Certificate to FS1 qualification. This review had been prompted by the observation of over-progression of some students, and the unfortunate resulting incident at a UK DZ in spring of 2011. This incident in particular was a result of a lack of skill/knowledge and confidence in the "swoop to pin" (aka "dive to pin") move being made by post FS1 skydivers.

Stuart asked CCIs for further feedback on the paper and that any input is sent to him direct.

- v) This item was held in camera and observers were asked to leave the room.

The Chairman reported that on the 5 August the CAA informed the BPA of a hot air balloon stunt that had taken place on the 27 July, which involved three balloons tethered together, where a Japanese TV presenter carried out a walk along a beam between balloons at about 2,000ft. After which the balloons climbed to about 8,500ft

where the presenter then made a Tandem jump. This stunt took place near Stroud, Gloucestershire. The CAA informed the BPA that they had not permitted the stunt to take place.

The CAA had sent an extract from the web-site of a company called 'Exclusive Ballooning' who appeared to have organised the event. The pictures from the web-site indicated that three BPA members were involved: Hans Donner (Advanced Instructor & Tandem Instructor), Reg Green (Instructor Examiner) and a Category System Instructor. Hans Donner had carried out the Tandem descent and Reg Green also jumped from the balloon. The Category System Instructor was a member of the ground crew.

The Chairman reported that all three members had been spoken to by the NCSO or TO and stated that at the time they believed that the stunt had CAA approval. On the 15 August the NCSO suspended, until this meeting, the Advanced Instructor and Tandem rating of Hans Donner, and the Instructor Examiner and Advanced Instructor rating of Reg Green.

The other parachutist who took part and was believed to have organised the stunt was a Brit, who was based in Dubai and not a BPA member.

Circulated to those present were statements from Hans Donner, Reg Green and the member of the ground crew, all of whom were present that evening.

The Chairman gave CCIs time to read the various statements, after which they were then given the opportunity to ask the members concerned any further questions relating to the incident.

The members concerned were then asked to leave the meeting room whilst STC made their deliberations.

The Chairman stated that CCIs needed to consider whether any further action was required and explained that they may decide that the persons concerned had been punished enough. They could increase the punishment, or they could decide to form a Panel of Inquiry. If STC decided on some form of punishment, Reg Green and Hans Donner could either agree to it, or they could ask that a Panel be formed.

Following further consideration, it was proposed by Martin White and seconded by Kieran Brady that the Instructor Examiner and Advanced Instructor rating of Reg Green and the Advanced Instructor and Tandem Instructor rating of Hans Donner be suspended for a period of six months to take effect from the date of the initial suspension of their ratings (15 August 2011) and that they both be sent a letter reminding them of their responsibilities.

For: 16

Against: 0

Abstentions: 1

Carried

It was agreed that no further action be taken with regard to the CSI who was part of the ground crew.

Reg Green and Hans Donner and the CSI concerned were then invited to return to the meeting and they were advised of STC's decision.

The Chair asked Reg Green and Hans Donner if they accepted STC's decision, to which they both agreed.

- vi) Mark Tether reported that he had an item for AOB that had not been previously notified. The Chairman permitted this item, but reminded CCIs that items for AOB must be notified in writing at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Mark Tether advised those present that he had recently come across a Neptune N3 Alpha digital audible altimeter, a type which music can be downloaded on to it.

He stated that he allowed a parachutist to jump with one of these altimeters. (The parachutist was wearing earphones and listening to music during his descent). Following the descent, Mark had spoken to parachutist on the ground who stated that he had jumped this altimeter at numerous DZs around the UK and he believed it was the new future of digital altimeters!

Mark stated that he believed that listening to music under canopy could be dangerous and ultimately lead to an incident. He had therefore, stopped the use of this type of altimeter on his drop zone.

The majority of CCI's present stated that they had not come across these type of altimeters on their drop zones and it was felt that their use should be at the discretion of individual CCI's.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 24 November 2011
BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester
at 7.00 p.m

3 October 2011

Distribution: Chairman BPA, Council, CCI's, All Riggers, Advanced Packers, CAA, Editor – Skydive,
File